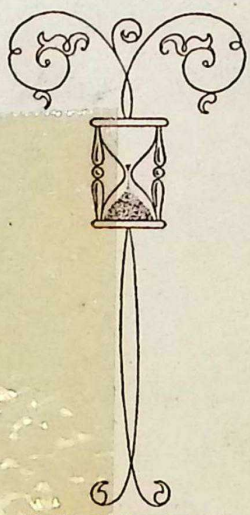
Thirty Years in a SECRETARY'S OFFICE



S. H. CHESTER

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Reminiscences of Thirty Years in a Secretary's Office

S. H. Chester

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Delivered at the General Assembly
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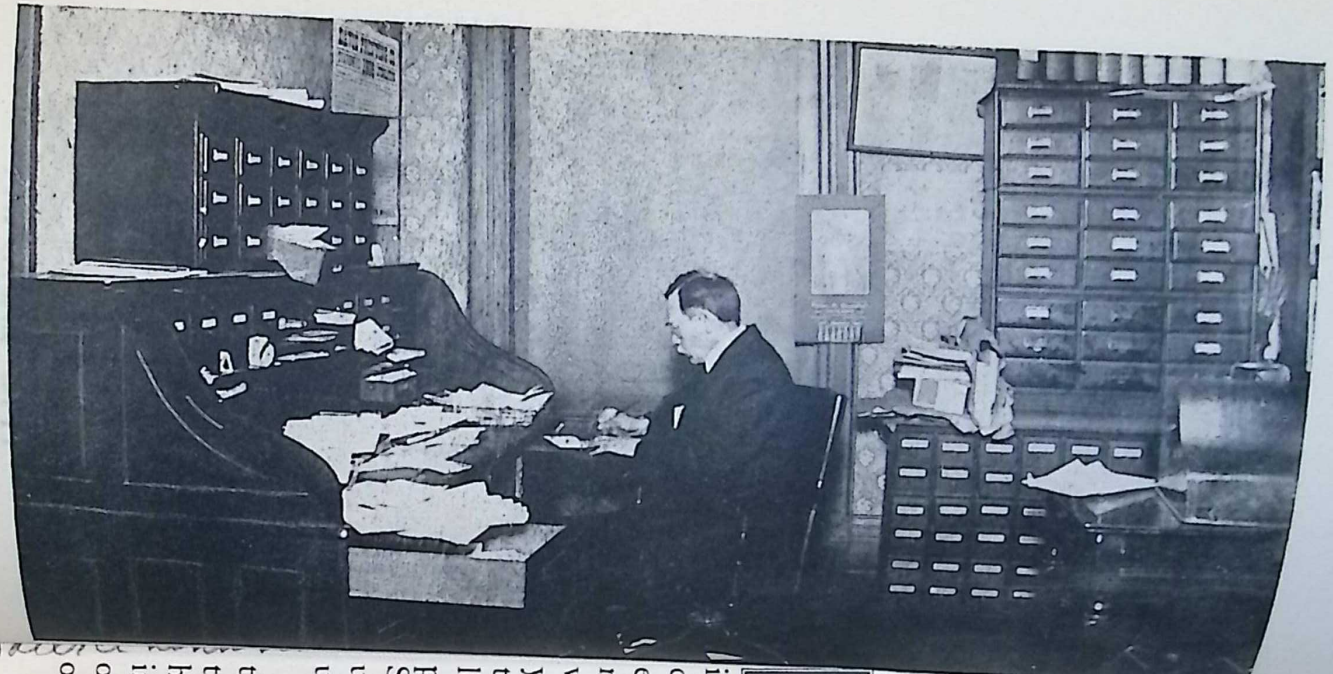

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REMINISCENCES OF THIRTY YEARS IN A SECRETARY'S OFFICE

S. H. Chester

YOU WILL APPRECIATE the difficulty anyone dealing in reminiscences must have in avoiding the appearance of egotism. All I have to say on that subject is that if any of you find yourselves at any time in danger of developing an undue amount of self-esteem, if you can arrange to secure an appointment to some public position in the Church, you will soon learn from candid friends things about yourself you may or may not have known before that will prove an effectual antidote to that unlovely characteristic. Criticism is the inevitable portion of those who serve the public in Church or State. And the results of criticism are not always unwholesome, even when it is unfriendly and unfair.

The Apostle reminds the Corinthian Christians that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty." I am not conscious of having succeeded to any great extent in confounding the mighty in my work, but I was certainly one of the "weak things of the world" in the capacity of a Mission Secretary when the responsibility of

conducting our foreign work was most unexpectedly thrust upon me on the first Tuesday of October, 1893, having had no experience or training, or so far as I or anyone else knew, any natural aptitude for that kind of work. It happened on this wise.

My predecessor, Dr. M. H. Houston, after ten years of able and devoted service, declined re-election by the Assembly of that year, with the view of returning to his mission work in China which he had given up for this service. Dr. Henry M. Woods of our China Mission was elected to succeed him. But because he loved his work in China too much to leave it, and partly also, I suspect, because during a recent furlough he had learned some things about some of the less enticing features of a Secretary's work by substituting for Dr. Houston during his absence in Brazil, he also declined the call.

Under the existing circumstances the problem of filling the vacant chair was not an easy one to solve. In the first place, all the Committee could offer anyone whom it might call was a temporary appointment till the next meeting of the Assembly, which the Assembly might or might not make permanent. The country was also in the throes of one of the greatest financial panics in our history. Banks were failing; industrial plants were closing down; financial chaos reigned, and one can scarcely imagine anything more unenticing than a call to become responsible for any enterprise requiring financial support in such a situation.

And so when the Committee began sending out its S. O. S. calls for some one to undertake this task, one after another these calls were declined. Finally, after two days of fruitless effort, *as a last*

resort, and because no other solution of the problem seemed possible, the appeal was made to me to take charge of the Office and do the best I could with it until the meeting of the Assembly in May. Under these circumstances I entered on the work, as may well be imagined, with great searchings of heart and with much reluctance and trepidation.

I.

MY SITUATION was not so forlorn as it would have been but for the way my hands were upheld by our Executive Committee of that day, one of the noblest bodies of men that were ever organized as a Committee in the service of our Church. Let me call the roll of their names: Ministers—J. H. McNeilly, J. W. Bachman, J. H. Bryson, Angus McDonald, Jere Witherspoon, R. C. Reed, E. A. Ramsey and myself; Ruling Elders—C. A. R. Thompson, R. J. Gordon and W. H. Raymond. Of this list Dr. Reed and I are now the only survivors.

Dr. McNeilly, whose experience and knowledge of the work gained during several years of service as Chairman of the Committee made up largely for my ignorance and inexperience, and who had been chiefly responsible for placing the burden on my shoulders, gave me unstintedly of his time and effort in response to every call I made upon him. My first administrative task done in collaboration with him, was the revision of our Manual in the direction of placing larger responsibility on our missions for administering the work on the field. This was an expression of confidence in them which they appreciated and which was amply justified in our subsequent history, and which on the Com-

mittee's part seemed a very obvious exercise o
common sense.

Dr. Reed and Mr. Raymond each gave severa
months of unremunerated service as acting Sec
retary during my two trips to the foreign field, an
Mr. Raymond was my almost daily adviser in a
matters pertaining to business and finance.

Dr. D. C. Rankin, who had formerly been Asso
ciate Secretary with Dr. Houston, was also in ou
office as Editor of *The Missionary*. He was a
Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile, having th
wisdom that belongs only to the pure in hear
and one of the most cherished memories of thos
early days will always be my association with hi
as a companion and co-worker, until he was calle
up to a higher service by the Master he loved.

When Dr. Rankin went on the visit to the Fa
East from which he did not return, his editori
work was taken up by Dr. H. F. Williams, who no
shares with me in the experience of semi-retir
ment, but whose fine literary and artistic gifts ar
still employed in the service of the Mission caus

It was Mr. C. A. R. Thompson, a very carefu
and conservative business man, who said to me o
the street the morning after I entered on the work
"I am afraid you haven't as much sense as
thought you had. For my part I would as soo
have the Presidency of the Commercial Nationa
Bank as to have your job." This was a bank tha
had closed its doors a few days before on accoun
of the panic, never to open them again.

It happened, however, that some things in th
general situation that threatened disaster wer
overruled to work the other way.

The anxiety of some friends of the Cause lest ur missionaries might suffer because of the panic, and also because an inexperienced pilot was at the helm, led them to bestir themselves and was the occasion of many special contributions. There was also a large amount of good Presbyterian money for which, in the prevailing situation, no safe investment could be found. For that reason, as has happened several times since, some of it found its way into our treasury. And so, quite to the surprise of everyone, at the close of the fiscal year it was found that we had not only not had to go into bankruptcy, but had been able to take care of all our obligations and had actually made a considerable gain over the income of any previous year.

From this experience I learned a lesson which carried me cheerfully through many a trying one in later years. It is that God has ways of taking care of His cause in times of stress and peril that are sometimes not dreamed of in our philosophy, and that when we are doing His work and, doing the best we can with the situation that confronts us, it is simple folly to allow ourselves to be made pessimists in our outlook on the future by any conjunction of circumstances whatsoever.

Mission Problems.

One does not go far on the road of mission administration before beginning to encounter its manifold "problems." It would not be practicable in a talk of this kind to deal with any of the great problems of the mission field, such as the relation of missions and missionaries to the native church, or the question of western denominationalism and creeds in the organization of the native church, or

the relation between educational and medical missions and evangelism. There are a few problems of a more personal kind, however, which should have a passing notice. So far as the Secretary himself is concerned it is certainly true that the greatest problem he has to deal with is himself. To keep one's self free from morbidity of every kind, and so to rule his spirit as to be able to look calmly at every situation that confronts him; and always to postpone action until the situation has been looked at from every point of view; and nnever to be either discouraged or resentful when opposition arises and things go differently from the way you would have them, "*hic labor, hoc opus est.*"

The problem of the missionary suffering from nervous irritability or torpid liver on account of climatic and other conditions is one that sometimes attains quite serious proportions. What is sometimes needed above all else in such a case is a breath of mountain air or, it may be, some heroic form of medical treatment. To recommend the latter course, however, is not always the most satisfactory method of relieving the situation. Missionaries, like other people, are apt to resent the suggestion of a physical cause for a supposed spiritual condition. The word of sympathy and kindness, agreement as far as possible with peculiar views and quiet abstention from argument on points where agreement is not possible, will sometimes save a good man to the work. This happened in the case of one of our most efficient missionaries who became mentally confused and imagined that he was more at variance with his church standards than he actually was on the points of divine healing and sanctification. He contended for both only as possibilities, and not as personal experiences. I

took the ground with him that his views on both points would, in my judgment, be a help instead of a disadvantage in his work, if in the one case they kept him from the excessive use of drugs, and in the other caused him to try to be as good as he possibly could be without making him pharisaical and self-righteous. On this view of the case he continued in the work he was about to give up, and very soon attained to a greatly improved condition of mental and spiritual health and, in consequence of that, of efficiency and happiness in his missionary work.

There is also the problem of the generous contributor with a hobby. I have found that people are always willing to spend money generously, and sometimes recklessly, for their hobbies. To secure and retain the good will and help of these contributors without yielding to their whims is a very important as well as difficult Secretarial problem. I have in my files some correspondence with this class of givers in which I feel an honest pride. One of the cases was that of a man who offered to give $600 a year to send a man to China to preach the second coming of Christ. On receipt of his proposal, I wrote him as follows:

"My dear Brother:

I regret that it will be impossible for us to comply with your request to send a man to China, to be supported by you, on the understanding that he goes especially to preach the second coming of Christ. We all believe in that doctrine and think it should be preached in its due proportion by our foreign missionaries as well as by our ministry at home. The same is true with reference to the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ. As much importance as we attach

to that doctrine, however, we would not feel justified in sending a man to China to preach it exclusively, because that would indicate that he was not a person of well-balanced judgment, which we deem to be a very necessary qualification for the work of a foreign missionary. There is a phase of this matter which I desire to propose for your consideration. Have you ever reflected that the man you send to China would probably have a life-time business of it to make the Chinese understand the significance of the first coming of Christ?

Hoping that you may feel it to be your privilege to help us first of all to get the facts of the life and death and resurrection of Christ made known to the Chinese, so that the way may be thus prepared for preaching to them in its due proportion the doctrine of His second coming, I remain,

Cordially and fraternally yours,"

To this letter in a few days I received the following reply:

"My dear Brother:

I have received your letter of --------, and after considering the matter I have decided to send you $400 *on your proposition.* Please find check enclosed for that amount.

Yours fraternally,"

On the strength of this contribution a missionary was sent out whose work was duly reported to the friend who supported him, who then continued his generous help to the cause to the day of his death.

This closes what I shall call the first chapter of these reminiscences.

II.

Our second chapter will cover the period of seven years, from 1894 to 1901.

Obstacles and Difficulties

THESE WERE HARD and trying years, from every point of view. At the Nashville Assembly of 1894 I was regularly elected as Foreign Secretary. I was both Office and Field Secretary, and had to be absent from home so much that my children thought that I did not live at home, but only came in occasionally as a visitor. On one occasion my little boy three years old was sick and his mother was attempting to give him a dose of oil which he did not wish to take. When I was called in to use my influence with him, not wishing to be influenced, as I entered the door he looked up and said, "Papa, I think you had better get your hat and go home."

Entertaining Angels

These reminiscences would be very incomplete without some mention of the silent partner in the business, who came to me forty years ago as a gift from the Lord, in which there was wrapped up for me the secret of perpetual youth, and without whose help given in many ways and at all times there would be a very different story to be told. Her part was to bear all the burden of the home, and to keep its doors wide open to every missionary that came to Nashville, and in that way to establish with them those relations of personal friendship that made it so much easier to deal with them in official relations. And it was seldom indeed that in these missionary visits we did not

experience the fulfilment of the Bible saying concerning the reward of hospitality. As for hardship and self-denial for the work's sake, it is certain that hers were far beyond any that I had to endure. And no one ever heard her complain.

No Organization

The only organization in those days for the promotion of the work was the old-fashioned Woman's Missionary Society which existed in about one third of the churches, and which usually included only a small proportion of the women of the church. They were enough to save the day, however, and it was the correspondence I had with the leaders of those societies that kept me in heart of hope, and gave me the assurance that a cause which had behind it their sympathy and prayers was one that could not ultimately fail.

Mistaken Economy.

Our promotional work was also handicapped by some ideas of administrative economy which then prevailed.

There were many who seemed to believe that the way to secure funds for financing our work was by saving administration expense rather than by increasing income. It was during this period that I made my visit to the Far East. The Assembly of 1897 answered the request of the missions for this visit by authorizing it, but only on condition that the expense of it should be secured from private sources. The first $100 of the amount was provided by a personal friend in New York, and the remainder by personal contributions of the missionaries!

As a matter of fact, shortly after I returned I visited one of the churches in Savannah, and a member of the Baptist Church who happened to be present and heard of the conditions in which some of our Korean missionaries were living sent in his check for about twice the cost of the entire trip for the purpose of building one of them a home. Nowadays we have learned that Secretarial visits to the field are not only a good financial investment, but that such a knowledge of the work as can only be obtained by personal contact with it is an indispensable part of a Secretary's educational equipment.

The suggestion that the expense of such visitations should be provided from private sources seems to me to be about parallel with the proposition that a corporation transacting a business of one and a half million dollars in some foreign country, and feeling the need of sending some representative of the corporation to examine into the condition of the business, should yet make the sending of such representative conditional on his being able to secure the necessary funds only from private sources.

The idea that these visitations are pleasure trips in any sense of the word is ludicrously wide of the mark. They are very interesting and the association with missionaries in their work and in their homes is altogether delightful. But when one leaves the port cities and visits the interior points where most mission stations are found, conditions are such as to make such travel physically trying to the extent of being actually dangerous to life. Shortly after I landed in China I was poisoned by lacquer varnish (the lacquer tree belongs to the

poison oak family, but its poison is much more virulent)—the eruption finally developing through infection into carbuncles, of which there were eleven in succession, each one requiring surgical treatment and from the last one of which I narrowly escaped blood poisoning.

On my visit to Brazil in 1901 I traveled on a steamer of only 2500 tonnage, which was not seaworthy, and was so infested with rats that during the twenty-one days voyage to Rio every kid glove and every kid shoe top on the steamer was eaten up. All our meat was spoiled before we reached the equator and we made no call at any port from New York to Pernambuco to renew our supply of fruits and vegetables.

On reaching Rio the old steamer, bearing the pretentious name of "The Helvetia," was sold for junk.

On that visit also the experience of personal association with the missionaries was delightful. But owing to the uncomfortable conditions of interior travel, whether by railroad or on horseback, and owing to my inexperience in dealing with the various insect pests with which that great country is infested, it was a very trying experience physically, and the final outcome of it was a spell of malarial fever from which I recovered only in answer to the prayers of many friends, and in spite of the positive prediction of the family physician to the contrary.

General Apathy

I am sure that our ministers of that day were, on the average, as good and pious men as those of the present day. But those of them who had any intel-

ligent and vital interest in foreign missions were few and far between, and those who had any large vision of the future of the work were fewer still. Missions had not yet begun to be regularly studied in any of our Seminaries and no organized propaganda of mission study in the churches had yet been inaugurated.

A prominent minister of the Synod of Virginia, an earnest and faithful pastor, who was also my warm personal friend, expressed to me his sympathy, and his regret that I had been charged with responsibility for our foreign work at a time when, as he thought, our Church was doing all it would or could do for that cause in the near future.

Another friend who was pastor of one of our strongest churches, replied to my request for the privilege of presenting our cause to his congregation, expressing regret at having to decline because, he said, the Session of the church had adopted a rule that no appeal for any cause should be made from that pulpit by any other person than the pastor. This church was representative of what I found to be a numerous class of churches in that day. A few of them still survive, in spite of their adherence to this self-protecting financial policy.

I wrote to another very prominent pastor asking if he would not like to have Dr. Snyder, who was home on furlough from Africa, come and tell his congregation of some of the wonderful things that were just beginning to happen in the work of that mission. The suggestion was regretfully declined for the reason that he "had never adopted the custom of opening his pulpit to traveling evangelists, or missionaries, or other irresponsible people!"

This of course was rather an extreme case, but it is a fact that there was an unfortunately large number of our pastors of that day who, for the lack of missionary education and intelligence, were also lacking in missionary enthusiasm and readiness to help. And for that reason it seemed impossible for the first five years of this period to make any further advance in our work.

The Twentieth Century Fund.

Finally, in 1899, the happy thought occurred to some one that we try to capitalize the sentiment connected with the incoming of the twentieth century by raising a "Twentieth Century Fund," to bring our annual income up to $200,000. A "drive," the first of our many drives, was put on for that purpose, and was continued for three consecutive years, with the result of raising about one-third of the required additional amount. The matter was so much on my mind that I began to dream about it. One night I had a Rip Van Winkle dream, imagining that I had gone to sleep and, on waking, was struck with the strangeness of my surroundings as Rip Van Winkle was. I asked some one how long I had been asleep. The answer was "twenty years." My reply was, "Well, have we raised that $200,000 for foreign missions yet?"

In our report to the Assembly in 1900, we told of these efforts and their result; and of the wide open doors and tantalizing opportunities in all our fields; and of the thin line at the front waiting for reinforcement, sick at heart with hope deferred. We hoped the Assembly would give earnest consideration to these matters, and would take some action

that would help us to arouse the Church to greater interest in the work.

It happened, however, that a few weeks before the Assembly met the Executive Committee had learned that the Secretary's salary was not quite sufficient to balance the family budget, and had voted him a small increase. Some most excellent brethren on the outside felt deeply aggrieved when they learned of this unwarranted use, as they regarded it, of the trust funds of the Church, and as the result of their activities a number of simultaneous overtures were sent up, asking the Assembly to look carefully into the matter and to rectify the mistake if one had been made.

When the report of the Standing Committee was presented for consideration a debate was immediately precipitated on the subject of these overtures and was continued for three days, in a very earnest and sometimes acrimonious manner, consuming all the time that Assembly had for the consideration of Foreign Missions, and leaving everything we had presented concerning the needs of the work at home and abroad to wait for a more convenient season for a hearing.

It seems incredible now that such things could have happened only twenty-five years ago. I have wondered whether I ought to mention them, or whether they ought not to be let sleep in the oblivion into which they have fallen. On the other hand, for our encouragement in the future, perhaps it is worth while to be reminded of the difficulties and obstacles through which, and over which, and out of which, we have had to come, before the progress made in recent years was possible.

III.

The Beginning of Progress.

BUT THIS DARK HOUR in our history was just before the dawn. Our third chapter begins here with the story of *progress*, which, although it has been like the rising tide, by alternate advances and recessions, has continued to the present day.

The Forward Movement.

In 1902, our "*Forward Movement*" was born. The plan of it was the assumption by churches, societies and individuals of definite responsibility for definite parts of the work, such as the salaries of missionaries or shares in the work of a station, and based on individual pledges taken in an Every Member Canvass. This is a permanent feature that has been retained in all subsequent financial plans and developments.

Three young men, Leighton Stuart, Lacy Moffett and Fairman Preston were raised up and specially endowed to be the leaders of this movement. A strong element in their appeal was that they were missionaries under appointment, detained at home for lack of funds. The result of their work in two years was the enlistment of 300 churches and 30 individuals in the movement, and the increase of our income from $165,000 to $236,000.

The Mobile Assembly.

An ecclesiastical teapot tempest arose over the Forward Movement in the Mobile Assembly in 1904, in which matters affecting me personally again occupied another three days that should have been given to more important matters. It

was very unpleasant while it lasted, but I do not regret it now for three reasons.

One is that it was the occasion of what seemed to be an unmistakable experience of answered prayer. I hesitate to mention this, for I have always felt that such experiences are too sacred to be publicly exploited. But perhaps there is a lesson in this incident for some one else that will justify the mention of it. After listening for three days to expressions of many varieties of opinion concerning my personality and work, some of which were the reverse of complimentary, and to some accusations which I felt to be unjust; and being a very human person, and having inherited some of the proclivities of my Welsh ancestors, and having never fully eliminated the environmental influences of Southwest Arkansas where I was brought up, I found myself in a decidedly belligerent frame of mind, and had determined to ask for the floor and tell how I felt about the way I was being treated, using great plainness of speech.

But at the home where I was entertained the custom was observed of repeating Scripture verses at the breakfast table. My hostess who had heard of the discussions in the Assembly and in the kindness of her heart had become deeply concerned on my account, looked at me when her turn came and repeated the verse, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Instantly, as if by the whisper of an angel, there came to my mind this verse, which was entirely foreign to any sentiment I had felt before: "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight." I went immediately from the breakfast table to the Assembly and spoke for about twenty

minutes, with perfect quietude of spirit, saying just what came to me at the time and scarcely anything of what I had premeditated, and with the result of bringing the whole episode to what proved to be a happy and satisfactory conclusion.

Another good thing that came out of the Mobile episode was the lesson I learned—which I would like to pass on to my younger brethren in official positions—as to the best way of dealing with critics and criticism. In so far as the criticism is just, try to profit by it. In so far as it is unjust leave it alone. If you are right and your critic is wrong try to give him credit for thinking he is right, and for not being actuated by bad motives, and then try to forgive him, and to treat him as God treats us when He forgives us, "as though we had never sinned." That is the policy I tried to pursue with my critics in the Mobile Assembly, with the result that my present relations with every surviving actor in that little drama, irrespective of the role he played, are those of warm personal friendship.

And it is with the deepest gratitude and satisfaction that I am now able to say that among all those with whom I have had to agree or disagree in the administration of our work during these thirty years there is not one that I know of today who stands toward me, or towards whom I stand in a relation of personal hostility.

A friend to whom I once made this statement suggested that he was not sure whether in making it I was not paying myself a doubtful compliment. But I think he was wrong. My philosophy of life has come to be that every true friend one can add to his list in a lifetime is a priceless asset, and every enemy, however insignificant, is a heavy

liability. And I shall be very happy if, at the close of my career, I can add as a codicil to my will the bequest that was found in the will of the late Justice Lamar of the Supreme Court: "My friendships, many and precious, I bequeath to my children in the hope that they will be cherished and perpetuated. I know of no enemies; but if such hereafter unhappily arise, let them be forgotten."

The best thing of all that came of the Mobile episode was the bringing of Dr. James O. Reavis into our work. I believe you will agree with me that the day that happened was a great day in our history, for we all know how uniquely gifted he was for the work to which he was first assigned of promoting the Forward Movement, and how superbly he has measured up to the larger responsibilities of later years. The outcome of the discussion was the decision that a second Secretary was needed to meet the demands of our growing work, and Dr. Reavis was the man finally secured for that position.

Beginning with January, 1905, he and I worked together as Co-ordinate Secretaries for six happy years, in perfect harmony, and with the result that when he retired in 1911 on account of broken health the number of our missionaries had been increased from 113 to 297 and our income from $236,000 to $452,000.

Methods of Organization

But the most important step of progress in this period is one that cannot be measured by statistics. It was the inauguration of methods and plans of *organization and missionary education*, that insured the continued progress of the work no matter what individuals might come or go.

Our Women's Work.

Our Women's Societies began to organize themselves into Presbyterials and Synodicals, and finally, under the leadership of our Mrs. Winsborough, into our Woman's Auxiliary, the finest form of woman's organization, in my judgment, that exists in any Church. It conserves all the advantage of the Woman's Board and avoids all its disadvantages. Instead of setting up an administration for woman's work separate from, or in rivalry with, that of the Central Committee, it has its representatives on that Committee, and has accomplished the practically solid line-up of all our women with the men in one unified administration.

It scarcely needs to be said that this accomplishment was not achieved without difficulty. It was only done "over the dead bodies," metaphorically speaking, of some of our best and strongest men. This incident came under my personal observation. In one of our churches two members of the Missionary Society went before the Session and asked permission for the Society to join the Presbyterial Union, not knowing that the pastor of the church was opposed to it. The matter was discussed, however, and the Session granted their request over his protest. The following Sunday he got even with them. He preached a sermon on Miriam, in which he held her up to proper reprobation as a disturber of the Camp of Israel, and "as the type of those women in our day who are trying to run the Church."

We still have among us, I am told, some recalcitrant brethren on this subject. Without giving any intimation as to my personal views, perhaps I may

say without impropriety that experience has pretty clearly shown that a Waterloo awaits every individual or combination of individuals that attempts to push back the Woman's Movement in our Church from the position it now occupies.

The Laymen's Movement.

In this period also our Laymen's Movement was born, whose great work in educating and enlisting the interest of our men in the work, is known to us all, but the history of which would have to be told in a separate address.

Our Missionary Platform.

The greatest event of all during this period, if not in the entire history of our work, was the adoption by the Birmingham Assembly, in 1907, of our *Missionary Platform*, in which as a Church we solemnly assumed responsibility for giving the Gospel to the people in certain definite territory in seven foreign countries, estimated at that time to contain a population of twenty-five millions.

The idea of this Platform was suggested in the findings of a Laymen's Convention held in Kansas City in that year. It was drawn up in our office and adapted to conditions in our Church, and taken to the Assembly as an overture from our Executive Committee. We scarcely hoped for its immediate adoption, but thought it might be referred to some *ad interim* Committee to be reported on the following year. But the Lord was better to us than our faith. That Assembly contained an unusual number of strong and forward looking men. Among them was Dr. Russell Cecil, who had always been a missionary pastor and had formerly been a member of our Executive Committee, and

who was made Chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions. When the draft of the Platform was laid before him it appealed to his missionary heart and he said, "let us not wait another year but incorporate it now in our Report.' The presentation of the Report and its adoption, after prayer for Divine guidance and without a word of discussion except a simple explanatory statement, by a unanimous rising vote, was the most impressive scene I have witnessed in any of the twenty-nine Assemblies I have attended in the interest of our work.

I have always believed that our Lord was pleased when He looked down from Heaven on this action of our Church, and that because of it His special blessing has rested on our work.

As a business proposition the Platform stabilized our work by giving us a definite goal to work for. It immediately strengthened our appeal by adding to all other considerations the force of an acknowledged responsibility.

Most of the other Protestant denominations have since taken similar action, but the honor of leadership in this great forward step in our Protestant missionary enterprise belongs to our Church.

Difficulties in the Congo.

It was during this period that we had our experience with King Leopold of Belgium. It will be remembered that the Congo State was turned over to him by the Berlin Congress of 1878 as his personal domain, and that he entered upon the administration of his trust with great professions of altruism and philanthropy. In our correspondence with him in reference to our African work we at first took those professions at their face value. It

did not take long, however, to discover that along with his philanthropic plans he had an eye to business and knew how to drive a bargain. In our first official communication concerning the work of our mission we requested the privilege of placing a steamer on the Congo River, and in the letter we took occasion to assure him of our desire to do all we could in helping him to carry out his plans for the intellectual and moral elevation of the African people. We received a reply in due time granting our request and expressing his desire to be of service to us in carrying out our plans, and offering to donate us the services of his carpenters at Leopoldville in reconstructing our steamer, which had to be shipped in parts over the railroad from Matadi to Leopoldville. All he proposed to charge for this service was that our steamer should make three trips from Leopoldville to Luebo during each year in the service of the State. This impressed us as a very friendly proposition until we found on investigation that these three trips *would about consume the entire navigable season*, and leave us no use of our steamer at all for mission purposes.

The story of his cruel exploitation of the natives in gathering rubber and ivory, and of Mr. Sheppard's exposure of some things of that kind of which he had been an eye-witness, and of his indictment of Dr. Morrison and Mr. Sheppard for publishing in the Kassai Herald the account of what Mr. Sheppard had seen on the charge of libeling the government, and of our negotiations with our State Department in trying to secure them a fair trial, was all written up at the time in our Church papers and has been published in the Appendix to Mr. Vinson's Life of Dr. Morrison.

This closes the third chapter of our story.

IV.

Our fourth chapter covers the period from 1911 to the present date, during which many important things have been done, having much to do with the development of our work, but which must be passed over rapidly for lack of time to speak of them in detail.

Recent Developments.

FOR HEALTH REASONS we had to give Dr. Reavis a ten year's leave of absence, and his place was taken by our present Executive Secretary, Dr. Egbert W. Smith, who has been now for fourteen years devoting his preeminent ability and his tireless energy to the administration and promotion of our work. During three years of this period we had the efficient help of Dr. Charles H. Pratt, who shared with our Chairman, Dr. Vance, responsibility for launching the ill-fated Inter-Church World Movement. Not for its ill-fatedness, however, which was due to the indiscreet and extravagant policies which came later into its management. The idea of the movement—the facing up of the entire Church to its entire task, and the effort to compass this task on cooperative lines,—was a sane and rational one, and one that will have to be adopted again and carried out under wiser leadership before this task can be accomplished.

During this period also we have organized and are conducting a regular Department of Missionary Education, first under the leadership of the lamented Dr. John I. Armstrong, and now under that of his capable and progressive successor, Mr. Edward D. Grant.

We have also had the benefit of the financial genius of our present Treasurer, Mr. Edwin F. Willis, who has organized and conducted the business side of our work so as to secure for us practically unlimited credit at the bank, and so that every missionary gets his salary and his working appropriation on time regardless of the state of our bank account.

During this period also our Stewardship Committee has been introducing one improvement after another in our financial system, leading up finally to the statesman-like provisions of our *Progressive Program*, which links up the educational and spiritual development of the Church with its financial development, and under which our income has again doubled within the last six years, and which only needs to be put into effect in all our churches to accomplish the final solution of our financial problem. The Program still needs some further adjustment in matters of detail, but its underlying principles are those which must characterize any sound system of missionary finance.

Expansion in Thirty Years

Let me now give you in closing a few figures showing, as far as it can be shown by figures, the actual expansion of our work during the thirty years under review,—from 1894 to 1924.

	1894	1924
Home Income	$143,000	$1,390,000
Field Income	$6,000	$370,000
Foreign Workers	135	517
Native Workers	140	3,600
Organized Churches	37	275
Communing Membership	2,700	50,000

These figures show more than an average tenfold development of the work.

They are far from showing, however, the entire results of the work. All foreign missionary work is pioneer and preliminary, having as its objective the establishment of self-governing and self-supporting native churches, on which the chief responsibility for evangelizing all non-Christian lands must ultimately fall. And all through these thirty years our missions have been setting up individual organized churches, and these have aggregated themselves into organized denominations, whose statistics are not listed in our mission reports after they cease to be under our supervision and control.

It seems a pity that no way has been found to avoid transporting our denominational divisions to these foreign lands where the history and meaning of them are entirely unknown. We have been able to leave behind most of the sub-denominational divisions of our home churches, and in all the fields where we are working the native churches growing out of the work of all branches of the Presbyterian Church, for instance, are organized into one Native Presbyterian Church. And so we find in China one Presbyterian Church of about 90,000 members; in Korea one of 60,000; in Japan one of 35,000; in Brazil one of 30,000; and in Africa and Mexico each one of about 20,000 members.

In other fields where we are not working there are Presbyterian Churches with an aggregate membership of about 150,000.

The work of all the Protestant denominations has had a similar expansion, and the estimate given of the total communing membership of all these native churches in mission lands is about three millions.

As to the spiritual quality of these native

churches it is doubtless much the same as that of the mother churches at home. Their membership includes all classes and conditions of men, the wheat and the tares being mingled together as we are told they will be in all the churches to the end of the age. It is a fact, however, that if the same care and caution in receiving members that are exercised in these foreign churches were exercised in our home churches the number of our reported accessions each year would be considerably curtailed.

And now with such an agency as this great native church, ready to cooperate with us, and to furnish the evangelistic force through which each of these unevangelized nations may hear the Gospel in its own tongue, spoken as only a native can speak it, what may we reasonably expect as to the time now required for the Church to finish its task of world evangelization?

It is characteristic of all great movements that they have slow beginnings and gather momentum and speed as they approach their goal. As a matter of fact, practically all of this development of which I have been speaking has occurred in the last fifty years; much the greater part of it in the last thirty years; and in the case of our own Church more than half of it in the last fifteen years. May we not, therefore, reasonably hope that some of the generation now living will see the time when the Gospel has been preached in all the world, and when, to that extent at least, all the ends of the earth will have seen the salvation of God?

As to what lies beyond that many and various views are held by different interpreters of New Testament prophecy. We have the Pre-millenial-

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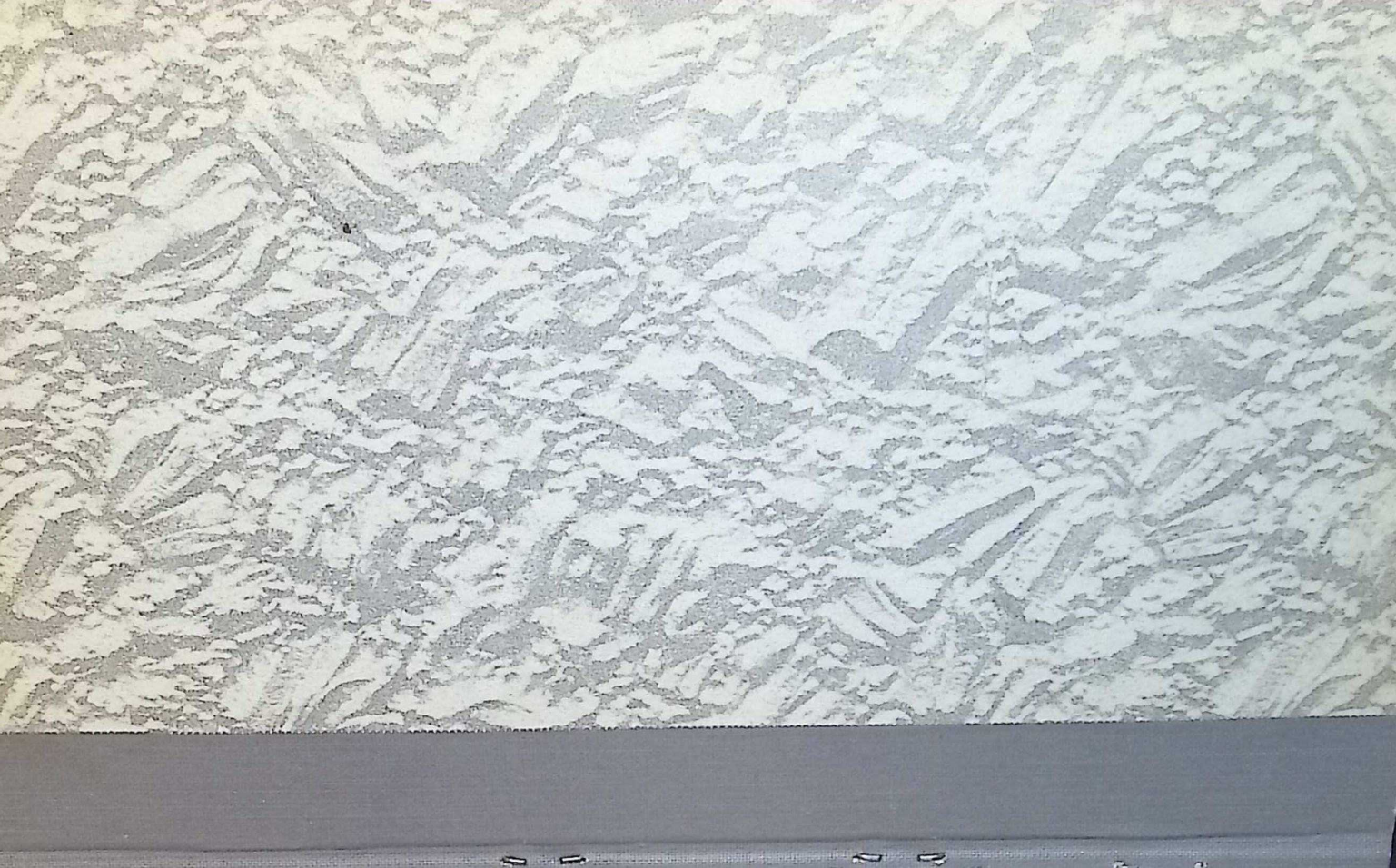
ists, the Post-millenialists and those who believe in no literal Millenium at all, but who interpret the statements about the Millenium in the book of Revelation as altogether figurative and symbolical.

But there are two points on which all must be agreed. One is the final triumph of the Gospel over all the powers of evil. Somewhere in the Calendar of God a day is fixed, far off or near we cannot tell, for it is not for us to know the times or the seasons, when at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

The other point on which all agree is that this triumph must follow and not precede the preaching of the Gospel among all nations. It is the Christ who before has been preached to the world, "whom the heavens have received until the times of the restoration of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Whatever may or may not be true about the Millenium, it is *down into an evangelized world* that the New Jerusalem will come,—the city that lieth four square, symmetrical in all its proportions, adorned with all conceivable beauty, and enriched by some special contribution to the final type of our redeemed humanity from every evangelized nation. And the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it, and *the nations* of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it. These will be Christian nations in reality and not in name only, having their national life in all its departments, social, industrial, political or religious, organized on the principle of Christ's law of love as expressed in the Golden Rule, instead of on the principle of their competing interests.

Then wars will cease to the ends of the earth because the occasion of war will have been removed. Then the nations will learn war no more, because the Kingdom of Christ which is the Kingdom of Peace will have come.

When this consummation comes, whether it comes in our day or whether it be postponed another thousand years, all those who have helped to bring it about will see it and share in it and rejoice in it. Those who are alive and remain will not be beforehand with them that sleep in that day, for the generations of them that sleep will be awakened when the trumpet of the seventh angel sounds, and the great voice from heaven proclaims, "The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."